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REVIEWS

HANDBOOK TOT DE GESCHIEDENIS DER CHRISTELIJKE KUNST.

By DR. F. PIJPER. Large octavo, 257 pp.; 125 illustrations in the text and 55 plates. Martinus Nijhoff, The Hague, 1918. fl. 10.

This is, undoubtedly, the first work of its kind of so comprehensive a character. Immediately the question springs to one's lips "Can a single volume cover so vast a field in an adequate manner?" Obviously it cannot, and herein lies the greatest fault of the book. The critic is puzzled at the daring boldness of the writer. Professor Pijper, within two hundred and fifty pages, endeavors to trace the history of church architecture, sculpture, and painting from the Early Christian period up to the close of the Renaissance. Any one of these three divisions is more than sufficient for a volume of this size, even though it be a handbook.

Let us judge the work, however, by the intentions of the author. We must not forget that a handbook is not written for those already steeped in scholarship, but for those who have not been reached, as yet, by more ponderous tomes. The ultra-scientific works in German, the rather dry encyclopaedic works in English, the profound and specialized writings in French, covering various aspects of the history of art have been to a great extent inaccessible to the average student. The encyclopaedias and general histories of art frighten the lay reader by their tremendous collection of facts. Professor Pijper desires to reach the great mass of art lovers—to meet their needs as a guide, while at the same time he hopes to be of assistance to teachers and lecturers in the history of art, and to theologians.

The work, therefore, has two classes of readers: the students of art and the students of Christian thought. To satisfy these the writer would need both great scholarship and aesthetic feeling. Professor Pijper is, himself a man of very comprehensive learning but his handbook lacks both of the great qualities re-

ferred to which we demand. A history of art, or a guide to such a history, must not be a museum of facts, but an interpreter of facts.

Professor Pijper, in endeavoring to be a guide, is often too much like a guide of the *concièrge* type. The necessarily superficial way in which he is forced—by the size of his work—to describe the great monuments of art is indicated by the profuse repetition of non-descriptive terms and generalizations like the following:

“ . . . rendered in the most beautiful taste ”

“Giotto’s coloring is pleasant”

“The medallions of Luca della Robbia enclose splendid figures, and splendid also are . . .”

“Fra Angelico’s ‘Coronation of the Virgin’ is a great symphony of celestial sounds”

Concerning the portrait of Anne of Cleves by Holbein “It is said that the King himself was so moved by this flattering portrait that he asked the hand of the lady in marriage.”

The best part of the book is that pertaining to the Early Christian period, which is far more thoroughly treated than any other. It is clear that the author has read the writings of such distinguished authorities as Strzygowski, Wickhoff, and Venturi, but as to disputed questions—the influence of the East vs. the West, and the origin of important monuments, he takes a middle ground. He himself is not able, apparently, to enter into and to understand the fundamental issues of the discussion.

Perhaps it is better that the beginner in the history of Christian art should not be tangled up with conflicting theories; but after so promising a start, with the ground, so far, fairly well covered, even the novice must be disappointed in having to rush through the Middle Ages as he does, jumping from architecture to sculpture and then to painting, like a giant with seven league boots.

Our final criticism of the work is that it ends with the Baroque period. Doubtless a work must have its limits, but if it is to be called “A Handbook for the

History of Christian Art," we naturally ask, "Did Christian art die with the seventeenth century? Is there no Christian art in our own time?"

The great epochs for Christian art, we admit, were the ages of faith—the Middle Ages. Professor Pijper would have achieved greater success had he limited his book to a "History of Christian Art in the Middle Ages." But, if he includes the Renaissance, which was so largely pagan, we can demand that he satisfy our queries about more modern times.

In architecture the great Gothic revival of the nineteenth century, lasting into our own days, may be a mere reflection of a previous age, but is it not a Renaissance as were the Renaissances of the ninth, thirteenth, and fifteenth centuries? Great churches and cathedrals have been built—great experiments are still being made in our own age. Students of art can therefore demand that these at least be discussed in the light of history.

In painting, are the Pre-Raphaelite and Idealistic movements of the nineteenth century in England to be ignored, on the basis that they are reproductions of a previous era? Rossetti, Burne-Jones, Holman Hunt may have sought nothing more than to revive the spirits of Fra Angelico and Benozzo Gozzoli, but they themselves were painters of Christian themes, and have a place in the history of art.

In France, what about Puvis de Chevannes? Did he have no independent style? Are his panels illustrating the life of Ste. Geneviève to occupy no place in the gallery of Christian art? And one also wonders whether Jules Bastien-Lepage, L'Hermitte, Cazin, and Dagnan-Bouveret did not contribute to the same historic gallery?

In Holland today, Professor Pijper's own country, what about Toorop? In this painter there is certainly a Christian character. Neither modern nor primitive, but perhaps both, he belongs to the great mystics. He should, in some way, be included.

Notwithstanding these disappointments, Professor Pijper's work is not without value. His rather thorough

bibliographies at the end of each chapter, and his indexes at the back of the book, not to mention the numerous illustrations. which are well selected, make the book useful as an introduction to the subject of Christian art. Its chief value should be to theological students who will find in the monuments of art here touched upon much that is illuminating on the subject of the development of Christian thought and worship. Art is too little known, or at least too little utilized by our theologians and religious leaders. Perhaps this is one of the reasons for the lack of religious art today.

ARTHUR EDWIN BYE.

A Handbook of Attic Red-Figured Vases, signed by or attributed to the various masters of the sixth and fifth centuries B. C.

By JOSEPH CLARK HOPPIN. 2 vols. Pp. xxiv, 472 and viii, 600. Illustrated. Harvard University Press, 1919. \$8.00 per volume.

All students of Greek vases have long felt the need of an illustrated Corpus of signed Greek vases, and all students of art will be indebted to Professor Hoppin for producing a work which entailed much correspondence and endless detailed labor and search as well as great expense. Professor Hoppin's life-long study of Greek vases, his many articles in this field and his recent book on *Euthymides and his Fellows* have made him one of the best authorities on vases and specially fitted for the task. Klein's memorable volume on *Meistersignaturen* has long been out-of-date and was not illustrated. Nicole's recent *Corpus des Céramistes Grecs*, published in a preliminary form in the *Revue Archéologique* IV, 1916 pp. 373-412, which is to form part of a monumental *Recueil archéologique Paul Milliet* containing all the literature pertaining to all the Greek artists, is also not illustrated and does not give the fifty or more nameless painters whom Beazley (cf. *The Art Bulletin*, vol. II, p. 42), the most important scholar in this field, has identified, many of them—like the Achilles, Pan, Berlin amphora, and Niobid painters—artists of the very first rank. All the artists identified by Beazley with a definite name are included by Professor Hoppin. I miss only the Painter of